

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

GAI completed a Phase I archeological survey of the proposed Bridge 305 replacement project along 6th Street over Little Creek, Sussex County. The proposed project will involve the replacement of the existing structure and reconstruction of the existing roadway approaches. Cultural resource investigations included background research, surface and subsurface field investigations.

Background research indicated that the general project vicinity possessed a high potential for containing historic archeological resources. In particular, this included the potential discovery of cultural features and deposits associated with a nineteenth-century milling complex known as "Big Mills." This included minimally a gristmill, sawmill, and tannery. Examination of historic maps suggests that the original milldam was located approximately 183 meters (600 feet) upstream (south) of the existing bridge. While the survey vicinity exhibited a potential for containing prehistoric archeological resources, the narrow project ROW in conjunction with disturbance from the road prism, standing water, and steep terrain (adjacent to the existing road) suggested that it was unlikely that such resources would be uncovered.

Owing to the above field conditions, only the westernmost portion of the project area was suitable for subsurface testing. Field investigations identified a mortared brick foundation wall likely representing the former mill building immediately north of the project's APE. No associated structures such as a mill race, dam, or sluiceway were identified, nor was evidence of other features potentially associated with historically-documented buildings. Shovel testing with the ROW including several STPs placed in close proximity to the foundation uncovered disturbed fill deposits associated with the construction of the modern road prism. Only four artifacts (discarded) were recovered from a single shovel test including a glass fragment, a brick fragment, and two unidentifiable metal fragments. These materials do not represent an archeological site per se nor do they provide any information concerning the prehistoric or historic use of the project area.

Given the location of the brick ruin (mill building) outside the limits of construction, it will not be affected by planned construction activities. However, features related to the millseat such as a dam, race and/or sluiceway could be present beneath the existing bridge and road as could other historically-documented structures. While GAI recommended archeological monitoring during project construction to insure the documentation of any encountered archeological resources, no such remains were identified (Cunningham 2000). Therefore, no additional archeological investigations are recommended along the project corridor.